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UNCLAS ROME 002442

SIPDIS

FROM U.S. MISSION IN ROME

USUN NEW YORK FOR ACTING AMBASSADOR AND LTAMLYN  
AMEMBASSY ALGIERS FOR AMBASSADOR ERDMAN AND DMCNICHOLAS  
USAID/W FOR AA/DCHA WINTER, DAA/AFR YOUNG, AFR/WA,  
DCHA/D/FFP LANDIS, D/OFDA, AA/GLOBAL PETERSON  
STATE FOR IO A/S HOLMES, A/S PRM DEWEY AND DAS/PRM MCKINLEY,  
A/S AF NEWMAN, AF/NEA, IO/EDA BEHREND/KOTOK,  
NEA/ENA FOR CUTRONA  
USMISSION GENEVA FOR AMBASSADOR MOLEY AND USAID/KYLOH  
BRUSSELS FOR AFRICA WATCHERS AND USAID/LERNER  
NSC FOR JDWORKEN AND AFRICA DIRECTORATE

E.O. 12958: N/A

TAGS: [EAID](#) [AORC](#) [PREF](#) [EAGR](#) [WI](#) [AG](#) [WFP](#) [UNICEF](#)

SUBJECT: LETTER TO CAROL BELLAMY, EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR,  
UNICEF, FROM AMBASSADOR TONY P. HALL ON THE NEED FOR A  
UNICEF PRESENCE IN TINDOUF TO ASSIST WESTERN SAHARA REFUGEES

1. FOLLOWING IS THE TEXT OF A LETTER TO CAROL BELLAMY,  
EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR, UNICEF, DATED JUNE 23, 2004, FROM TONY  
P. HALL, AMBASSADOR, U.S. MISSION TO THE UN AGENCIES, ROME.  
BEGIN LETTER:

"MS. CAROL BELLAMY  
EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR, UNICEF  
UNICEF HOUSE  
3 UNITED NATIONS PLAZA  
NEW YORK CITY, NEW YORK 10017-3505

DEAR CAROL:

AT THE RECENT SECOND REGULAR SESSION (MAY 26-27) OF THE  
WFP EXECUTIVE BOARD, THE BOARD APPROVED A SEPTEMBER 2004-  
AUGUST 2006 WFP PROTRACTED RELIEF AND RECOVERY OPERATION  
(PRRO) TO ASSIST WESTERN SAHARA REFUGEES (158,000  
BENEFICIARIES) AT A TOTAL COST TO WFP OF \$39.5 MILLION. THE  
OPERATION HAS LONG BENEFITED FROM FUNDING BY UNHCR, THE  
EUROPEAN COMMUNITY HUMANITARIAN ORGANIZATION (ECHO), NON-  
GOVERNMENTAL ORGANIZATIONS (PRIMARILY SPANISH), AND PRIVATE  
DONATIONS. THE UNITED STATES IS ALSO A MAJOR DONOR.

ONE OF MY OFFICERS VISITED THE FOUR SAHARAWI REFUGEE  
CAMPS IN THE TINDOUF REGION OF SOUTHWESTERN ALGERIA - EL  
AIUN, AWSERD, SMARA AND DAKHLA - IN JANUARY 2004. HE  
REPORTED ON A UNHCR, WFP, AND THE CENTRE FOR INTERNATIONAL  
CHILD HEALTH, INSTITUTE OF CHILD HEALTH (LONDON)  
ANTHROPOMETRIC AND NUTRITION SURVEY IN THE TINDOUF CAMPS  
THAT DOCUMENTED: A) GLOBAL ACUTE MALNUTRITION OF 10.6  
PERCENT AMONG 6-59 MONTH OLD CHILDREN; B) CHRONIC  
MALNUTRITION IN EXCESS OF 30 PERCENT FOR UNDER-FIVES; AND C)  
ANEMIA AMONG REFUGEE CHILDREN (AROUND 35 PERCENT) AND FOR  
WOMEN OF CHILDBEARING AGE (47.6 PERCENT AMONG NON-PREGNANT  
WOMEN).

CLEARLY, THIS SURVEY RAISES NUTRITIONAL CONCERNS THAT  
MUST BE SYSTEMATICALLY ADDRESSED. FORTUNATELY, BOTH UNHCR  
AND WFP HAVE STEPPED UP THEIR PHYSICAL PRESENCE IN THE FOUR  
CAMPS AND NOW HAVE FUNCTIONING OFFICES IN TINDOUF. BUT THEY  
REPORT THAT FAR TOO MANY CHILDREN HAVE NOT BEEN VACCINATED  
AND ARE NOW AT HIGH RISK OF THE LETHAL COMBINATION OF  
MALNUTRITION, ACUTE RESPIRATORY INFECTIONS AND DIARRHEA.

I WOULD LIKE TO HAVE UNICEF CONSIDER ESTABLISHING A  
PRESENCE IN THE CAMPS FOCUSED ON SUPPORTING HEALTH, PUBLIC  
NUTRITION AND DISEASE SURVEILLANCE SYSTEMS.

CAROL, I KNOW THAT UNICEF'S PLATE IS FULL AND THAT YOU  
AND YOUR UN COLLEAGUES ARE INTENTLY AND RIGHTLY FOCUSED ON  
THE HORRIBLE TRAGEDY STILL UNFOLDING IN DAFUR AND EASTERN  
CHAD. BUT IN THIS LARGELY "FORGOTTEN" EMERGENCY IN THE  
WESTERN SAHARA, THESE CHILD MALNUTRITION LEVELS CAN BE A DE-  
STABILIZING FACTOR IN THE REFUGEE CAMPS AND COULD IMPEDE  
CONFIDENCE-BUILDING MEASURES WITH THE CONCERNED PARTIES,  
LIMITING UN LEVERAGE IN MOVING THE POLITICAL PROCESS  
FORWARD.

IN CLOSING, THANK YOU FOR ALL THAT YOU'RE DOING ON BEHALF OF  
THE POOR AND HUNGRY THROUGHOUT THE WORLD. GOD BLESS.  
SINCERELY, AMBASSADOR TONY P. HALL  
CC: JIM MORRIS, EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR, WFP." END OF LETTER.

2. US MISSION ROME WOULD BE GRATEFUL IF USUN NEW YORK COULD  
PASS THIS TEXT ALONG TO CAROL BELLAMY.

3. ORIGINAL SIGNED LETTER WILL FOLLOW. HALL

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